

State Commission for Conservation of Soil, Water & Related Resources

USDA Holden Service Center, 52 Boyden Rd. 508-829-4477 ext. 3

## Quarterly Meeting

October 9, 2014, 9:30 am

# Draft AGENDA

# Introductions

Approval of July 17, 2014 Minutes; – (voting item)

## State Commission

## Real Property Authority for Conservation Districts – Discussion

Policy Committee report – proposed grant program guidelines (**possible voting item**)

# Envirothon Committee Report

## Ethics Commission Requirements for Conservation Districts

## Partner Updates

NRCS, DAR, F&W, DEP, Divisions, others

\* Future Meeting Dates -

January 8, 2015  
April 9, 2015

Environmental Bond Bill Excerpts – Signed August 13, 2014

2000-7029

For a grant program to assist and provide funding to conservation districts as defined in sections 19 to 24, inclusive, of chapter 21 of the General Laws, to perform innovative projects to conserve the soil, water and related natural resources of the commonwealth including, but not limited to, conservation education, demonstration projects, the MassEnvirothon and other projects related to water and soil conservation; provided, that the program shall be administered by the director of conservation services in the executive office of energy and environmental affairs

\$1,625,000

SECTION 3. Section 24 of chapter 21 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2012 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out, in lines 1 and 2, the words “The supervisors of a conservation district shall also:” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- A conservation district and its supervisors shall, in addition to any other powers granted under sections 21 to 25, inclusive,:

SECTION 4. Said section 24 of said chapter 21, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by inserting after paragraph (4) the following paragraph:-

(4A) To: (i) acquire by purchase, exchange, gift, grant, bequest or otherwise, any ownership interests and rights in real property located within the boundaries of the district and in personal property; (ii) hold such real and personal property interest in the name of the conservation district; (iii) subject to law and the nature of such interest, maintain, administer and improve any such property so acquired; (iv) receive income from such property and to expend any such income to carrying out the purposes and provisions of the conservation district as provided under sections 21 to 25, inclusive; and (v) sell, lease or dispose of such property or interests therein; provided, however, that interests in real property and personal property shall be acquired for conservation purposes and shall not be used or disposed of except in furtherance of such conservation purposes; provided further, that upon acquisition by a conservation district, such ownership interest and restricted purpose in real property shall be recorded in the name of the district in the registry of deeds or land court for the jurisdiction wherein the property is located; and provided further, that all such property, including any income realized from such property or upon sale thereof, shall be exempt from taxation for state, county and municipal purposes and from betterments and special assessments.

2000-7056

For the conservation partnership grant program to assist not-for-profit corporations and conservation districts defined in sections 19 to 24, inclusive, of chapter 21 of the General Laws, in acquiring interests in lands suitable for purposes of conservation or recreation; provided, that the corporation shall be formed for 1 of the purposes described in section 4 of chapter 180 of the General Laws and the corporation shall be considered an exempt organization within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; provided further, that grant funds shall be expended to reimburse an eligible corporation or conservation district for money expended by it in establishing a project approved by the secretary of energy and environmental affairs under this program in an amount that the secretary shall determine to be equitable in consideration of anticipated benefits from the project, but in no event shall the amount of the reimbursement exceed 50 per cent of the cost of the project; provided, however, that no reimbursement shall be made under this item to a corporation or conservation district unless a project application is filed by the corporation with the secretary setting forth the plans and information that the secretary may require and approved by the secretary, nor until the corporation or conservation district shall have certified, in a manner approved by the secretary, its ability to provide an amount equal to the total cost of the project, nor until the project has been completed, to the satisfaction of the secretary, in accordance with the approved plans; provided further, that all projects shall include the grant by the corporation or conservation district of an appropriate perpetual conservation restriction, within the meaning of sections 31 and 32 of chapter 184 of the General Laws, to the city or town in which the project is located, to be managed by either its conservation or its recreation commission, or a federal or state agency, or a not-for-profit corporation, or combination of these entities; provided further, that all projects shall provide appropriate public access as determined by the secretary; and provided further, that the secretary may adopt rules and regulations to carry out this item

\$8,000,000